

SENATE RESOLUTION 719—RECOGNIZING NATIONAL AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE MONTH AND CELEBRATING THE HERITAGE AND CULTURE OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES AND THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF AMERICAN INDIANS AND ALASKA NATIVES TO THE UNITED STATES

Mr. DORGAN (for himself, Ms. MURKOWSKI, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. SCHUMER, Mr. SALAZAR, Mr. FEINGOLD, Mr. TESTER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. BAUCUS, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. NELSON of Nebraska, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. BAYH, Mr. THUNE, Mr. BINGAMAN, Mr. CONRAD, and Mr. JOHNSON) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Indian Affairs:

S. RES. 719

Whereas from November 1, 2008, through November 30, 2008, the United States celebrates National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives are descendants of the original, indigenous inhabitants of what is now the United States;

Whereas, in 2000, the United States Census Bureau reported that there were more than 4,000,000 people in the United States of American Indian and Alaska Native descent;

Whereas, on December 2, 1989, the Committee on Indian Affairs of the Senate held a hearing exploring the contributions of the Ir-quois Confederacy, and its influence on the Founding Fathers in the drafting of the Constitution of the United States with the concepts of freedom of speech, the separation of governmental powers, and checks and balances among the branches of government;

Whereas the Senate has reaffirmed that a major national goal of the United States is to provide the resources, processes, and structure that will enable Indian Tribes and tribal members to obtain the quantity and quality of health care services and opportunities that will eliminate the health disparities between American Indians and the general population of the United States;

Whereas Congress recently reaffirmed its trust responsibility to improve the housing conditions and socioeconomic status of American Indians and Alaska Natives by providing affordable homes in a safe and healthy environment;

Whereas, throughout its course of dealing with Indian Tribes, the United States Government has engaged in a government-to-government relationship with Tribes;

Whereas the United States Government owes a trust obligation to Tribes, acknowledged in treaties, statutes, and decisions of the Supreme Court, to protect the interests and welfare of tribal governments and their members;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives have consistently served with honor and distinction in the Armed Forces of the United States, some as early as the Revolutionary War, and continue to serve in the Armed Forces in greater numbers per capita than any other group in the United States;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives speak and preserve indigenous languages and have contributed hundreds of words to the English language, including the names of people and locations in the United States;

Whereas Congress has recognized Native American code talkers who served with honor and distinction in World War I and

World War II, using indigenous languages as an unbreakable military code, saving countless American lives;

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives are deeply rooted in tradition and culture, which drives their strength of community; and

Whereas American Indians and Alaska Natives of all ages celebrate the great achievements of their ancestors and heroes and continue to share their stories with future generations: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the celebration of National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month during the month of November 2008;

(2) honors the heritage and culture of American Indians and Alaska Natives and the contributions of American Indians and Alaska Natives to the United States; and

(3) urges the people of the United States to observe National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month with appropriate programs and activities.

Mr. DORGAN. Mr. President, on October 30, 2008, President Bush issued a proclamation designating November 2008 as National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month. The President follows a tradition of Presidents since 1990 of issuing proclamations making November the month for recognizing the significant contributions of tribal governments and individual Native Americans to our Nation's history and development.

Congress also has traditionally recognized the contributions of Native Americans to the United States in the form of resolutions, findings, coins and medals. The resolution, which I am sending to the desk to ask for its immediate consideration, continues in that tradition.

This resolution recognizes some of the many contributions that Native Americans have made to help build our great Nation as well as the continued contributions of Native Americans to the growth of the United States. From contributions to the United States and the world in the fields of agriculture, medicine, music, language, and art to influencing the founding documents of our Federal Government to the use of native languages to develop an unbreakable military code that helped defeat the Axis powers in World War II, Indian Tribes and individual Native Americans have shaped our Nation's history in remarkable ways.

Through this resolution, we celebrate these and many other contributions of tribal governments and Native Americans during the month of November. I urge all citizens, and local, State, tribal and Federal Governments and agencies to take time this month to learn more about the many facets of Native American history, traditions, and their important contributions to the formation of the United States.

This year, the United States Senate and the Congress as a whole acted on two important pieces of legislation that seek to meet our Nation's legal, treaty and trust obligations to promote health care and housing for the residents of Indian Country.

S. 1200, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act of 2008, passed the Sen-

ate in February of this year with a margin of 83–10. As Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, this legislation has been the priority for the Committee in the 110th Congress. The Indian health care act was last authorized in 1992, and this bill would help bring Indian health care into to 21st century. I am proud to report that we were able to pass this legislation out of the Senate for the first time in almost a decade. A number of Senators were instrumental moving this legislation forward in the Senate. Unfortunately, our work was not completed. The House was unable to pass the legislation and it remains unauthorized as the health care needs of Native Americans remain sorely under-funded and services remain outdated. Indian health care will continue to remain a priority for the committee and every effort will be made to reauthorize this legislation as soon as possible.

In addition to the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, the Senate approved a \$1 billion authorization for additional funding for the Indian Health Service as a part of the Senate Budget Resolution. Congress also passed a \$250 million authorization for Indian health care through an amendment to the Tom Lantos and Henry J. Hyde United States Global Leadership Against HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria Reauthorization Act of 2008.

In September of this year, Congress succeeded in enacting the Native American Housing and Self-Determination Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2008. This bill makes long needed improvements to Native housing programs, and authorizes the flexible use of funding to strengthen Native communities through economic and community development.

While health care and housing are critically important to Indian Country and represent significant steps forward in fulfilling the trust obligation between Congress and the First Americans, it is important to acknowledge several other achievements in the 110th Congress.

Congress passed into law the Code Talkers Recognition Act of 2008 which provides well-deserved Congressional gold medals to each tribe that had members who were Code Talkers in any foreign conflict. Each next of kin to the valiant Code Talker who served their country will receive a silver duplicate.

The Higher Education Reauthorization Act was passed into law, which reauthorized the Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities Assistance Act, increasing the amount of money per student in tribal colleges and universities. A study has been requested of the General Accountability Office which will allow for an evaluation of public schools on Indian lands to assist Congress in meeting its obligations to Indian education.

Congress also passed the Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act allowing Tribes for the

first time to directly administer foster care and adoption programs offered by the Federal government, allowing tribes to continue strengthening their communities by ensuring safe and caring homes for their Native children.

Congress passed the Native American \$1 Coin Act, which recognizes the contributions of Native Americans to the development of the United States through an annually changing image on the reverse of the Sakakawea \$1 coin that is now in circulation.

Congress also passed into law a joint resolution designating November 28, 2008 as Native American Heritage Day, honoring the contributions and achievements of our First Americans.

The Treaty of Fort Laramie and other treaties acknowledged the specific obligations that the United States owes to the Tribes located in my State of North Dakota. Much has been done this Congress to begin to fulfill this legal responsibility and the more general trust responsibility that Congress owes to all Indian Tribes.

However, as is evident with Congress' failure to pass the Indian Health Care Improvement Act of 2008, much still remains to be done. The resolution before the Senate today would simply honor the hard work, traditions, culture, and contribution of the First Americans.

I ask that this resolution be adopted quickly and that it act as an encouragement to all people of the United States to observe the month of November as National American Indian and Alaska Native Heritage Month.

SENATE RESOLUTION 720—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF PANCREATIC CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Mrs. CLINTON (for herself, Mr. CASEY, and Mr. SPECTER) submitted the following resolution, which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 720

Whereas approximately 37,680 people will be diagnosed with pancreatic cancer this year in the United States;

Whereas pancreatic cancer is the 4th most common cause of cancer death in the United States;

Whereas Randolph ("Randy") Frederick Pausch, who was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer in 2006, delivered his "Last Lecture" on September 18, 2007, which gave a voice to victims of pancreatic cancer, and inspired people to live life to the fullest;

Whereas the lecture by and advocacy of Randy Pausch have brought, and will continue to bring, renewed advocacy and commitment to the field of pancreatic cancer research and treatment;

Whereas the lecture by and advocacy of Randy Pausch have touched countless people throughout the United States and the world and encouraged them to change their lives for the better;

Whereas 75 percent of pancreatic cancer patients die within the first year of their diagnosis and only 5 percent survive more than 5 years, making pancreatic cancer the deadliest of any cancer;

Whereas there has been no significant improvement in survival rates in the last 30

years and pancreatic cancer research is still in the earliest scientific stages;

Whereas there are no early detection methods and minimal treatment options for pancreatic cancer;

Whereas when symptoms of pancreatic cancer present themselves, it is generally too late for an optimistic prognosis, and the average survival rate of those diagnosed with metastasis of the disease is only 3 to 6 months;

Whereas the incidence rate of pancreatic cancer is 40 to 50 percent higher in African Americans than in other ethnic groups; and

Whereas it would be appropriate to observe November as Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month to educate communities across the Nation about pancreatic cancer and the need for research funding, early detection methods, effective treatments, and treatment programs: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate supports the goals and ideals of Pancreatic Cancer Awareness Month.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 106—COMMENDING THE GOVERNMENT OF SWITZERLAND FOR ONGOING ASSISTANCE IN THE CASE OF ROBERT LEVINSON, URING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN TO INTENSIFY COOPERATION WITH THE GOVERNMENT OF SWITZERLAND AND THE FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION ON THE CASE OF ROBERT LEVINSON, AND EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO THE FAMILY OF ROBERT LEVINSON

Mr. NELSON of Florida submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 106

Whereas United States citizen Robert Levinson is a retired agent of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, a resident of Florida, the husband of Christine Levinson, and father of their 7 children;

Whereas Robert Levinson traveled from Dubai to Kish Island, Iran, on March 8, 2007;

Whereas, after traveling to Kish Island and checking into the Hotel Maryam, he disappeared on March 9, 2007;

Whereas neither his family nor the United States Government has received further information on his fate or whereabouts;

Whereas March 9, 2009, marks the second anniversary of the disappearance of Robert Levinson;

Whereas the Government of Switzerland, which has served as Protecting Power for the United States in the Islamic Republic of Iran in the absence of diplomatic relations between the United States Government and the Government of Iran since 1980, has continuously pressed the Government of Iran on the case of Robert Levinson and lent vital assistance and support to the Levinson family during their December 2007 visit to Iran;

Whereas officials of the Government of Iran promised their continued assistance to the relatives of Robert Levinson during the visit of the family to the Islamic Republic of Iran in December 2007; and

Whereas the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, stated during an interview with NBC News broadcast on July 28, 2008, that officials of the Government of Iran were willing to cooperate with the Federal Bureau of Investigation in the search for Robert Levinson: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress—

(1) commends the Embassy of Switzerland in Tehran and the Government of Switzerland for the ongoing assistance to the United States Government and to the family of Robert Levinson, particularly during the visit by Christine Levinson and other relatives to Iran in December 2007;

(2) expresses appreciation for efforts by Iranian officials to ensure the safety of the family of Robert Levinson during their December 2007 visit to Iran, as well as for the promise of continued assistance;

(3) urges the Government of Iran, as a humanitarian gesture, to intensify its cooperation on the case of Robert Levinson with the Embassy of Switzerland in Tehran and to share the results of its investigation into the disappearance of Robert Levinson with the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

(4) urges the President and the allies of the United States to engage with officials of the Government of Iran to raise the case of Robert Levinson at every opportunity, notwithstanding other serious disagreements the United States Government has had with the Government of Iran on a broad array of issues, including human rights, the nuclear program of Iran, the Middle East peace process, regional stability, and international terrorism; and

(5) expresses sympathy to the family of Robert Levinson during this trying period.

Mr. NELSON of Florida. Mr. President, I am introducing a resolution in the Senate that touches on one of the tragic cases of a Floridian, Bob Levinson, who has been missing in Iran since he visited Kish Island off the coast of Iran in the Persian Gulf in early 2007. I have spoken on this issue ad infinitum before to call the attention of the Congress to the plight of Mr. Levinson as well as to the difficulties that are faced by his wife Christine and their seven children.

Bob Levinson, a businessman and a former FBI agent, vanished after checking out of his hotel on the resort island of Kish on March 9, 2007. It is no doubt the wish of everyone who knows this man that Bob Levinson be reunited with his loved ones. It has been very difficult to get information out of the Government of Iran. The State Department has delivered a number of requests for information and cooperation to the Iranian Government through our diplomatic intermediary, which is the Government of Switzerland. Unfortunately, Iran continues to claim it has no information on the fate of Bob Levinson.

Mrs. Levinson and her eldest son, Daniel, and her sister, Ms. Halpin, traveled to Tehran and Kish Island in December of last year in the hopes of finding information about Bob Levinson's disappearance. The Iranian authorities, to their credit, extended courtesies to her and they promised her at the time they would help in the case, but those promises have not been fulfilled.

This resolution I am introducing urges Iranian officials to fulfill their promises of assistance to the Levinsons. It calls for Iranian investigators to meet with the FBI to discuss the Levinson case. It calls for the U.S. Government and our allies to